

*No. Samuel Allen*  
**RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.**

*"Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy."*

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VOL. I.

The Editor, at the request of some of his subscribers, engaged, in the Introductory Number, to publish a few articles of Religious Intelligence, of a retrospective nature, in order to bring his readers acquainted with the present state of the Religious world. The following sketch from the Missionary Register will be found admirably adapted to this purpose.

*A brief Historical View of the Progress of the Gospel, in different nations, since its first Promulgation.*  
By the Rev. HUGH PEARSON, M. A.

THE state of the world at the introduction of Christianity was such as at once evinced its necessity, and presented the most favourable opportunity for its extensive propagation.

The various nations, of which the Roman Empire was composed, were sunk in the grossest superstition, and debased by the prevalence of the most pernicious vices. The utmost of what mere human wisdom could do towards the moral improvement of the world had been fairly tried during the long course of four thousand years; and the result of that protracted trial had served to prove, that the world by its own wisdom knew not God, and was unable to discover and enforce the principles of true religion and virtue. The Jews, the only people to whom a Divine Communication had been made, were in a state of degeneracy and corruption: it was time therefore that the Supreme Governor of the universe, who for wise though mysterious reasons had so long permitted this ignorance, should at length introduce some clearer and more

effectual manifestation of his will, to correct the errors of mankind, and to rescue them from the corruption and misery in which they were involved.

For the successful promulgation of such a Divine Revelation, the political situation of the greater part of the world afforded peculiar advantages. Nations differing widely from each other, both as to their language and their manners, were comprehended within the vast limits of the Roman Empire, and united together in social intercourse. An easy communication was thus opened to the remotest countries; and the most ignorant and barbarous people had gradually felt the civilizing influence of the laws, the commerce, and the literature of the Romans. At the birth of Christ, the empire was, moreover, in a state of greater freedom from wars and dissensions than it had been during many preceding years; as if the tranquility which it then enjoyed had been designed not only to facilitate the progress of his religion, but to be descriptive of the benign and peaceful effects which it was intended to produce among mankind.

For such beneficent purposes, and at such an auspicious period, the Son of God descended upon earth, and assumed our nature. It would be foreign to the purpose of this brief view of the progress of Christianity, to dwell on the succeeding history of Christ himself. Suffice it to say, that, during the course of his ministry upon earth, our Lord demonstrated the truth of his Divine Mission by a series

of unquestionable miracles; delivered to his Disciples the leading doctrines and precepts of his religion; and, shortly after his ascension, qualified them, by the effusion of the Holy Ghost, for the great and important work of propagating his religion throughout the world.

#### CENTURY I.

It was the express command of Christ, that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." This is a passage of Scripture, which, as it has been justly observed, (Milner's Church Hist. ch. i.) at once points out what the Christian Religion is, and where we may look for its commencement. The first Christian church was accordingly established at Jerusalem; but within a short time after the memorable day of Pentecost, many thousands of the Jews, partly natives of Judea and partly inhabitants of other Roman Provinces, were converted to the faith of Christ. The persecution which soon after succeeded the death of the first martyr St. Stephen, was the occasion of propagating the Gospel throughout Palestine. The Apostles alone ventured to remain at Jerusalem. The rest of the Disciples dispersed themselves into the several parts of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria; wherever they went, they successfully preached the doctrine of Christ.

While the Apostles and others were thus diligently employed in propagating the Gospel, Saul of Tarsus, was persecuting the infant Church. But in the midst of his career, he was suddenly converted to the faith of Christ, and commissioned as his Apostle to the Gentiles. Independently of the miraculous gifts with which this extraordinary man was endowed, his nat-

ural talents were of the highest order, and he had made considerable attainments both in Hebrew and Grecian learning. He possessed also a spirit of indefatigable labour, and of invincible fortitude and patience, which admirably qualified him for the arduous office to which he was called. To the eminent abilities and exertions of this great Apostle must accordingly be attributed much of the unparalleled success of the Gospel at its first publication.

About this time, the Churches throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed an interval of repose from the persecutions of the Jews, and were in consequence considerably strengthened and enlarged. At this favourable conjuncture, St. Peter, leaving Jerusalem, where, with the rest of the Apostles, he had hitherto remained, travelled through all quarters of Palestine, confirming the Disciples, and particularly visited Lydda, Saron, and Joppa, the inhabitants of which places almost universally received the Gospel. (Acts ix. 35.)

Hitherto Christianity had been preached to the Jews alone; but the time was now arrived for the full discovery of the Divine Purpose to extend the knowledge of it to the Gentiles. This important event took place at Cæsarea, the residence of the Roman Governor, about seven years after the ascension of our Lord. During the transactions which have been just related, some further circumstances took place respecting the extension of Christianity. When the Disciples, who were driven from Jerusalem on the death of St. Stephen, had passed through Judea and Samaria, they travelled as far as Phœnice, Cyprus and Antioch, as yet confining their labours to



the Jews. At length, however, some of them, on their arrival at Antioch, addressed themselves to the Greek\* inhabitants of that city, and a great number of them were in consequence converted to the faith. Intelligence of this event being communicated to the Church at Jerusalem, the Apostles immediately sent Barnabas to confirm the work of their conversion; who, finding so promising a field for Apostolical labours, went to Tarsus, and brought back with him the converted Saul. At Antioch they continued a year, forming and establishing the first Christian church among the heathen; and in this city the Disciples were first denominated *Christians*.

The subsequent history in the Acts of the Apostles is almost exclusively confined to the travels of St. Paul and his fellow-labourers, which are so universally known, that it would be superfluous to enter into any minute detail of them. It may be sufficient to observe in the words of the Apostle himself, that "from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, he fully preached the Gospel of Christ." This comprehensive circuit included Syria, Phœnicia, the rich and populous provinces of Asia Minor, and of Macedonia and Greece; in which extensive districts, the cities of Antioch, Lystra, and Derbe, of Thessalonica and Philippi, of Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus, particularly witnessed his zeal and activity in the Christian Cause. Nor were these the boundaries of his ministry. Rome itself, and, according to Clement and others,† the countries west of Italy, including Spain, and possibly the shores of Gaul and Britain, were

visited by this great Apostle, till his various labours in the service of Christ were at length terminated by his martyrdom near Rome in the year 64 or 65.

Of the travels of the rest of the Apostles, and of the further propagation of Christianity during the remainder of the first century, but very short and imperfect accounts remain. St. Peter was more particularly successful amongst his countrymen the Jews. The last historical notice in scripture of this zealous Apostle presents him to us at Antioch. After this, he was probably engaged in preaching chiefly to the Jews of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia Proper, and Bythinia, to whom his First Epistle is addressed; and about the year 63, he is supposed to have left those provinces, and to have proceeded to Rome: (Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii.) where he is reported to have received the crown of martyrdom in the same year with his illustrious fellow-apostle St. Paul.

St. John is said to have continued in Palestine till near the commencement of the Jewish War, (A. D. 66.) at which eventful period he quitted that devoted country, and travelled into Asia. He fixed his residence at Ephesus; which celebrated city and the neighbouring territory were the great scene of his ministry during the remainder of his long extended life.

St. Matthew, according to Socrates, (Hist. Eccl. lib. i. e. 19.) preached in the Asiatic Ethiopia. Egypt according to Eusebius and St. Jerome, was visited by St. Mark, who founded a Church at Alexandria. The extensive field which is assigned to St. Thomas by Origen and Sophronius is Parthia, Media, Carmania, Bactriana, and the neigh-

\* i. e. Heathens. See the various reading.

† Well's Historical Geography of the Old and New Testament, vol. ii. p. 298.

houring nations. Socrates records St. Andrew to have preached in Scythia, and St. Bartholomew in India.

Besides the districts which are thus assigned by ecclesiastical tradition to these Apostles, there are others, in which Christian Churches were unquestionably planted, and which are incidentally mentioned in Scripture; as Cyrene and its neighbourhood, and the whole northern coast of Africa; Cyprus, Crete, and the Islands of the Ægean Sea. It is, however, impossible to trace with accuracy the travels of the Apostles and their various fellow-labourers in the great work of propagating Christianity throughout the world.

Yet it is evident from the narrative of St. Luke, from the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter, from the testimony of ecclesiastical writers, and occasionally even of heathen authors themselves\*, that the Gospel was preached in almost every quarter of the Roman Empire, and even far beyond its boundaries, within the space of thirty years after our Lord's ascension; and that in most of those parts great numbers were "daily added to the Church.†"

Before we pursue the history of its progress during the subsequent ages, it may not, however, be irrelevant to the design of this brief sketch of the subject, to advert to the *causes* of the rapid extension of the Gospel which has been just exhibited, and to the *effects* which it produced in the world. Various have

\* See particularly Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. C. Plin. Tarjano Imp. lib. x. Ep. 97, with Paley's remarks on those passages, Evid. vol. ii. p. 234.

† Col. i. 6. 23. The extraordinary progress of Christianity during the first century is admirably described by Bishop Pearson, in his Exposition of the Creed. Art. Christ; and by Dr. Paley, Evidences, vol. ii. p. 220—227.

been the attempts of antichristian writers to account for the extraordinary propagation of Christianity at this period from the operation of causes merely human. One ingenious and laboured effort of this kind was particularly made by a late celebrated historian‡, whose unhappy prejudices against the religion of Christ led him to attribute its rapid success to certain causes, which he represented as being wholly unconnected with any divine interposition.

(To be continued.)

## FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

### BIBLE SOCIETIES.

*The following sketch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, drawn by that Institution, brings its history down to May, 1814.*

The Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society are induced to hope, that a concise statement of its most important proceedings, from its establishment in 1804, to the present time, will both gratify the Members and Friends of the Institution, and prove the means of procuring, on its behalf, additional assistance.

The OBJECT of the British and Foreign Bible Society, is, distinctly and exclusively, to promote, in the largest practicable extent, the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, both at home and abroad. By a fundamental law of the Society, the copies circulated in the languages of the United Kingdom are those of the authorised version only.

‡ Hist. of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. 1. chap. 15. For satisfactory replies to the reasonings, and insinuations of the sceptical historian, see the Bishop of Landaff's Apology for Christianity, and the Tracts of Lord Hailes and Mr. Milner.



The **CONSTITUTION** of the Society admits the co-operation of all persons who are disposed to concur in its support.

The **BUSINESS** of the Society is conducted by a Committee, consisting of thirty-six Laymen, six of whom are Foreigners residing in London and its vicinity ; half of the remainder are Members of the Church of England, and the other half, Members of other denominations of Christians.

The President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and Secretaries, are *ex officio* Members of the Committee ; and every Clergyman or Dissenting Minister, who is a Member of the Society, is entitled to attend and vote at all Meetings of the Committee.

The **PROCEEDINGS** of the Society may be perspicuously arranged under the distinct heads of **FOREIGN** and **DOMESTIC** ; the former comprehends its connexions with the Continent and Islands of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America ; and the latter regards the United Kingdom, including supplies of the Holy Scriptures sent from hence to Foreign parts.

#### *Europe.*

Among the effects produced on the Continent of Europe, by the example, influence, and operations of the **BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY**, the establishment of Societies having the same object, may be regarded as one of the most beneficial and important. These are as follows :

#### *German Bible Society.*

This Association, originally established at Nuremberg, and since advantageously transferred to Basle in Switzerland, was formed at the recommendation of the Committee

of the British and Foreign Bible Society, accompanied by the promise of a pecuniary grant on its incorporation. The funds of the Society have since been liberally applied, to aid its operations ; and by its assistance, together with various contributions in Germany and Switzerland, the German Bible Society has been enabled to publish 16,000 copies of the German Bible, printed on standing types ; 3,000 French Bibles ; 4,000 French Testaments ; 4,000 Romanese, (2,000 in each dialect ; ) and 3,000 in Italian. It has also succeeded in establishing an Auxiliary Bible Committee at Chur, the capital of the Grisons, by which both the printing and the distribution of the Romanese Scriptures will be facilitated. Similar Committees have also been established at St. Gall and Schaffhausen, the former of which have given particular attention to the neighbouring Canton of Thurgau, in some parts of which there was a peculiar dearth of the Holy Scriptures.

A Bible Committee having been formed at Zurich, consisting of men highly distinguished by their literary attainments and unfeigned piety, they have recently proceeded to form a regular Bible Society ; and having exhausted their resources by the purchase of Bibles, and printing an edition of the New Testament, an additional sum of 250*l.* has been granted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, to enable them to proceed in the important work of printing a large octavo edition of the German Bible. A Bible Institution has likewise been established at Stutgard, under the sanction of his Majesty the King of Wirtemberg, for the benefit of the poor in his dominions who are destitute of the Holy Scriptures. This Institution has been assisted by grants

from the British and Foreign Bible Society, amounting to 500*l*.

*Bible Society at Berlin.*

This Society was also constituted on the precedent, and by the recommendation and pecuniary encouragement, of the **BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY**, under the auspices of some persons of rank, and with the express approbation of the King of Prussia, who assisted its funds by a donation.

The efforts of this Society have been directed to three important undertakings; the printing editions of the Scriptures in the Bohemian, the Polish, and the Lithuanian Dialects.

1. Of the *Bohemian Bible*, an edition, consisting of 3,000 copies, has been printed, and the whole impression was rapidly circulated among the Protestant Congregations in Bohemia and Silesia. The Berlin Society having expressed a regret, from the extensive and urgent demands for copies in Bohemia and Moravia, that a larger impression was not printed; the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society encouraged them to proceed with the second edition of 5,000 copies, by a grant of 550*l*. together with a loan of 1,500 dollars. Several of the Catholics, both at Berlin and Prague, have manifested a disposition to receive the Bohemian Bible.

2. Of the *Polish Bible*, an edition, consisting of 8,000 copies, with 4,000 extra New Testaments, has been printed. The total expense of this work amounted to 1600*l*. of which 960*l*. were contributed by the British and Foreign Bible Society. By recent accounts, it appears that the Polish Scriptures are in great demand. Many copies have been sent to Warsaw, to some places in upper Silesia, and to others in Austrian Galicia. One thousand copies were

purchased for gratuitous distribution (under the direction of the Berlin Society) to the poor, at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

3. An edition of the *Lithuanian Bible*, consisting of 3,000 copies, is in considerable forwardness. This work, for which there existed a strong demand, and to which the British and Foreign Bible Society has contributed 500*l*. is under the direction of a Committee at Königsberg, in correspondence with the Berlin Society.

The Königsberg Committee are also promoting the circulation of the Polish Scriptures among the numerous poles in Prussia; and they have determined to furnish every Polish school in those parts with a few Bibles and Testaments gratuitously.

Bible Committees in Francfort, Leipsic, Halle, Luebeck, Osnabruck Swedish Pomerania, &c. are likewise actively engaged in promoting the cheap sale, or gratuitous distribution, of the Holy Scriptures, in different parts of Germany.

Grants have also been made by the British and Foreign Bible Society, through various channels, to the Catholics in different parts of Germany and Switzerland, at various times, to a considerable amount; and the Scriptures thus distributed have been thankfully accepted.

*Hungarian Bible Institution.*

The distribution of some German Bibles and Testaments in Austria and Hungary, by a German Minister, at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society, produced an affecting appeal to the Committee from two Professors in Presburg; who represented that there are upwards of a million of Protestants in Hungary, that there are



few Bibles among those who speak the Slavonic and Hungarian dialects, and that many of them are extremely poor. A grant of 500*l.* was therefore made, on condition of a Society being established in Hungary, for the purpose of printing and circulating the Scriptures in those dialects. In consequence of these measures, "The Hungarian Bible Institution" has been formed at Presburg.

*Bible Societies in Sweden.*

The Society, denominated "The Evangelical Society," which was incorporated under the sanction of the King and Privy Council at Stockholm, owes its origin to the zeal and suggestion of certain Corresponding Members of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Its objects are, the circulation of the Scriptures, and the distribution of Religious Tracts; but, by a fundamental rule of its Institution, *each object has its separate fund*, and a distinct account is kept, and published, of its income and expenditure. The connexion of the British and Foreign Bible Society with the Society at Stockholm, is of course restricted to that department of it which respects the circulation of the Scriptures. To promote this object, several pecuniary grants, amounting in the whole to 2,150*l.* have been made. The attention of the Stockholm Society has hitherto been directed to the printing editions of the Scriptures in the Swedish and the Laponese Dialects.

1. Of the Swedish Scriptures, which are printed by standing types, 11,000 Bibles and 33,600 Testaments have been worked off. Of the first edition of the Bible every copy had been purchased before the impression was completed.

2. The New Testament in the di-

alect of Lapland, has been printed under the superintendence of the Bishop of that diocese. Two thousand five hundred copies have been sent into Swedish Lapland, at the public expense, and under proper regulations, for the suitable distribution of them by the Royal Chancery of Stockholm. The King of Sweden has expressed his satisfaction at these exertions in favour of the Swedish Laplanders. The Russian Government has also issued a Proclamation in the Emperor's name, authorising the importation of Laponese New Testaments into Russian Lapland, and the St. Petersburg Bible Society has undertaken to forward them. Measures have also been taken to facilitate the distribution of 1,000 copies in that part of Lapland subject to the Danish Government.

The Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society availed themselves of the services of the Rev. Dr. Brunnmark, who visited Sweden in 1813, to supply the poor of such parishes as in the course of his tour he might find to be the most destitute of the Holy Scriptures; for which purpose they placed at his disposal the sum of 300*l.* Dr. Brunnmark not only justified the confidence thus reposed in him, but had the happiness to procure the formation of three new Bible Societies, under the designations of the **GOTHENBURG**, the **WESTERAS**, and the **GOTHLAND** Bible Societies, which are severally patronized by the Bishops of those dioceses within which they are included; the second comprehends the two provinces of Westmania and Dalecarlia. To each of these new Societies the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society granted a donation.

*(To be continued.)*

## DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

## AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Editor is happy to commence the head of Domestic Intelligence, in the first number, with an account of the formation of the *American Bible Society*. He has omitted several articles in order to publish it entire. The address accompanying it expresses the feelings, which the event is calculated to inspire, in far happier language than any which he is able to adopt. He cannot, however, do justice to his own feelings, without congratulating his subscribers, and the Christian public, on the commencement of an Institution, under the happiest auspices, which promises so effectually to aid the universal distribution of the Bible throughout the land in which we live.

At a meeting of Delegates from different Bible Societies, convened in the Consistory Room of the Reformed Dutch Church, on the 8th day of May, 1816; Joshua M. Wallace, Esq. of New-Jersey, was chosen President of the Convention, and the Rev. Dr. John B. Romeyn, and Rev. Lyman Beecher, Secretaries.

The meeting was then opened with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Nott.

The following persons appeared as Delegates:—

Rev. Dr. S. Spring, *from the Merimack Bible Society*; Rev. Mr. Humphreys, Rev. Dr. I. Lewis, *Fairfield do.*; Rev. Dr. John M. Mason, Rev. Dr. Philip Milledoler, Rev. Dr. John B. Romeyn, Rev. Mr. J. Williams, Rev. Mr. Gardiner Spring, *New-York do.*; Rev. Dr. Bradford, Rev. Dr. Neill, Rev. Mr. Chester, *Albany do.*; Mr. William Williams, Gen. John Lincklaen, *Oneida do.*; Rev. Andrew Oliver, Rev. Ely F. Cooley, Mr. James Cooper, *Otsego do.* Mr. Guysbert B. Vroom, Mr. Henry W. Warner, Mr. W. C. Mulligan, Mr. Robert Sedgwick, *New-York Auxiliary do.*; Rev. Dr. E. Nott, *Union College do.*; Rev. Dr. S. Blatchford, *Rensselaer and Saratoga Bible Societies*; Rev. Dr. J. Bassett, Rev. Mr. Sayre, Rev. Mr. D. S. Bogart, Mr. A. Van Sinderen, Mr. Charles Wright, *Long-Island do.*; Rev. R. Forest, *Delaware do.*; Mr. Levi Callender, Mr. Orin Day, *Greene do.*; Mr. Joshua M. Wallace, Mr. Samuel Bayard, Rev. Dr. J. Richards, Rev. Mr. G. S. Woodhull, Rev. J. McDowel, *New-Jersey do.*; Mr. Thomas J. Biggs, Mr. J. W. Platt, *Nassau-Hall do.*;

Rev. Mr. David Jones, Mr. C. Hornblower, *Newark do.*; Mr. John E. Caldwell, *Female Bible Society of Burlington, and do. of Kingston*; Rev. Mr. S. Wilmer, *Gloucester Bible Societies*; Mr. M. S. Clarke, *Franklin do.*; Rev. Mr. J. H. Rice, *Virginia, Frederick, Norfolk, and Petersburg Bible Societies*; Mr. W. Burd, *Lynchburg do.*; Rev. Dr. Hall, *North-Carolina do.*; Rev. Dr. J. Blythe, *Kentucky do.*; Mr. H. Ford, *Cayuga do.*; Rev. Dr. A. Proudfit, *Washington County, N. Y. do.*

The following gentlemen, though not formally commissioned as Delegates; yet appearing from satisfactory evidence, to be substantial representatives of their respective Societies, or of a number of members thereof, for all the purposes contemplated by this Convention, were admitted to seats, viz.

Rev. Mr. Lyman Beecher, Mr. Ichabod Skinner, Rev. Mr. N. W. Taylor, *Connecticut Bible Society*; Rev. Dr. J. Morse, *from the Middlesex, New-Hampshire, and Dartmouth University Bible Societies*; Mr. William Jay, *from the West-Chester Auxiliary Bible Society*; Rev. Mr. Henshaw, Mr. Joshua Sands, Gen. Swift, *Bible and Common Prayer-Book Society of Long-Island.*

The following gentlemen were also received as members, viz.

John Murray, jr. Thomas Eddy, John Griscom, Dr. Valentine Mott, *of the Society of Friends.*

On motion,

*Resolved Unanimously*, That it is expedient to establish, without delay, a general Bible Institution, for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment.

A committee consisting of Dr. Nott, Dr. Mason, Mr. Bayard, Mr. Wilmer, Mr. Beecher, Charles Wright, Mr. Rice, Mr. Jones, Dr. Morse, Mr. Jay, and Dr. Blythe, was appointed to prepare the plan of a Constitution of the said Society; and an Address to the public on the nature and objects thereof.

And the convention adjourned until the morning of Friday, the 11th inst. at eleven o'clock.

The convention met according to adjournment, and their committee laid before them the draft of a constitution, which having been read first in the whole, and afterwards by paragraphs, and carefully considered, was unanimously adopted; and is hereunto annexed.

The committee reported also an address to the public, which in like manner, was unanimously approved, and is hereunto annexed.

The convention then proceeded to the choice of managers of the *American Bible Society* for the current year, and the following persons were unanimously chosen, viz.

Henry Rutgers, John Bingham, Richard Varick, Thomas Farmar, Stephen Van Rens-



elaer, Samuel Boyd, George Suckley, Divie Bethune, William Bayard, Peter M'Carthy, Thomas Shields, Robert Kailston, John H. B. Rodgers, Dr. Peter Wilson, Jeremiah Evans, John Watis, M. D. Thomas Eddy, William Johnson, Ebenezer Burrill, Andrew Gifford, George Gosman, Thomas Carpenter, Leonard Bleecker, John Cauldwell, Rufus King, Thomas Stokes, Joshua Sands, George Warner, De Witt Clinton, John Warder, Samuel Bayard, Duncan P. Campbell, John Aspinwall, John Murray, jr. Charles Wright, Cornelius Heyer.

After due notice of their appointment, the managers met in the City Hall, on the 11th May, and unanimously elected the following persons to the offices for which they are named respectively.

*President*—Hon. ELIAS BOUDINOT, of New-Jersey.

*Vice-Presidents*—Hon. John Jay, Matthew Clarkson, Esq. Hon. Smith Thompson of New-York; Hon. John Langdon, of New-Hampshire; Hon. Caleb Strong, Hon. William Gray, of Massachusetts; Hon. John Cotton Smith, of Connecticut; Hon. Jonas Galusha, of Vermont; Hon. William Jones, of Rhode-Island; Hon. Isaac Shelby, George Madison, Esq. of Kentucky; Hon. William Tilghman, of Pennsylvania; Hon. Bushrod Washington, William Wirt, Esq. of Virginia; Hon. Charles C. Pinckney, of South-Carolina; Hon. William Gaston, of North-Carolina; Hon. Thomas Worthington, of Ohio; Hon. Thomas Posey, of Indiana; Hon. James Brown, of Louisiana; John Bolton, Esq. of Georgia; Hon. Felix Grundy, of Tennessee; Robert Oliver, Esq. of Maryland; Joseph Nourse, Esq. of the District of Columbia.

*Secretary for Foreign Correspondence*—Rev. Dr. John M. Mason.

*Secretary for Domestic Correspondence*—Rev. Dr. John B. Romeyn.

*Treasurer*—Richard Varrick, Esq.

Information of the above choice was communicated by a committee of the Managers to the convention, who having before resolved, that the first annual meeting of the "American Bible Society" be held in the city of New-York; and the business of the convention being now accomplished, their meeting was closed with prayer, by the Rev. Mr. Wilmer, and the convention was dissolved.

### Constitution.

I. The Society shall be known by the name of *The American Bible Society*, of which the sole object shall be, to encourage a wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment. The only copies in

the English language to be circulated by the Society, shall be of the version now in common use.

II. This Society shall add its endeavours to those employed by other Societies, for circulating the Scriptures throughout the United States and their territories; and shall furnish them with stereotype plates, or such other assistance as circumstances may require. This society shall also, according to its ability, extend its influence to other countries, whether Christian, Mahometan, or Pagan.

III. All Bible Societies shall be allowed to purchase at cost from this Society, Bibles for distribution within their own districts. The members of all such Bible Societies as shall agree to place their surplus revenue, after supplying their own districts with Bibles, at the disposal of this Society, shall be entitled to vote in all meetings of the Society; and the officers of such Societies shall be *ex officio*, directors of this.

IV. Each subscriber of three dollars annually shall be a member.

V. Each subscriber of thirty dollars at one time shall be a member for life.

VI. Each subscriber of fifteen dollars annually shall be a director.

VII. Each subscriber of one hundred and fifty dollars at one time, or who shall, by one additional payment, increase his original subscription to one hundred and fifty dollars, shall be a director for life.

VIII. Directors shall be entitled to attend and vote at all meetings of the Board of Managers.

IX. A Board of Managers shall be appointed to conduct the business of the Society, consisting of thirty-six Laymen, of whom twenty-four shall reside in the city of New-York or its vicinity. One fourth part of the whole number

shall go out of office at the expiration of each year, but shall be re-eligible.

Every Minister of the Gospel, who is a member of the Society, shall be entitled to meet and vote with the Board of Managers, and be possessed of the same powers as a manager himself.

The Managers shall appoint all officers and call special general meetings, and fill such vacancies as may occur, by death or otherwise, in their own Board.

X. Each member of the society shall be entitled, under the direction of the Board of Managers, to purchase Bibles and Testaments, at the Society's prices, which shall be as low as possible.

XI. The annual meetings of the Society shall be held at New-York or Philadelphia, at the option of the Society, on the second Teusday of May, in each year; when the Managers shall be chosen, the accounts presented, and the proceedings of the foregoing year reported.

XII. The President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer, and Secretaries, for the time being, shall be considered, *ex-officio*, members of the Board of Managers.

XIII. At the general meetings of the Society, and the meetings of the Managers, the President, or in his absence the Vice President first on the list then present; and in the absence of the Vice President, such member as shall be appointed for that purpose, shall preside at the meeting.

XIV. The managers shall meet on the first Wednesday in each month, or oftener, if necessary, at such place in the city of New-York, as they shall from time to time adjourn to.

XV. The Managers shall have the power of appointing such per-

sons as have rendered essential services to the Society, either Members for life, or Directors for life.

XVI. The whole minutes of every meeting shall be signed by the Chairman.

XVII. No alteration shall be made to this Constitution, except by the Society at an annual meeting, on the recommendation of the Board of Managers.

*To the People of the United States.*

Every person of observation has remarked that the times are pregnant with great events. The political world has undergone changes stupendous, unexpected, and calculated to inspire thoughtful men with the most boding anticipations.

That there are in reserve, occurrences of deep, of lasting, and of general interest, appears to be the common sentiment. Such a sentiment has not been excited without a cause, and does not exist without an object. The cause is to be sought in that Providence which adapts, with wonderful exactitude, means to ends; and the object is too plain to be mistaken by those who carry a sense of religion into their speculations upon the present and the future condition of our afflicted race.

An excitement as extraordinary as it is powerful, has roused the nations to the importance of spreading the knowledge of the one living and true God, as revealed in his Son, the Mediator between God and Men, Christ Jesus. This excitement is the more worthy of notice, as it has followed a period of philosophy, falsely so called, and has gone in the track of those very schemes which, under the imposing names of reason and liberality, were attempting to seduce mankind from all which can bless the life that is,



or shed a cheering radiance on the life that is to come.

We hail the re-action, as auspicious to whatever is exquisite in human enjoyment, or precious to human hope. We would fly to the aid of all that is holy, against all that is profane; of the purest interest of the community, of the family, and the individual, against the conspiracy of darkness, disaster, and death—to help on the mighty work of Christian charity—to claim our place in the age of Bibles.

We have, indeed, the secondary praise, but still the praise, of treading in the footsteps of those who have set an example without a parallel—an example of the most unbounded benevolence and beneficence: and it cannot be to us a source of any pain, that it has been set by those who are of one blood with the most of ourselves; and has been embodied in a form so noble and so Catholic, as “*The British and Foreign Bible Society.*”

The impulse which that institution, ten thousand times more glorious than all the exploits of the sword, has given to the conscience of Europe, and to the slumbering hope of millions in the region and shadow of death, demonstrates to Christians of every country what they *cannot* do by insulated zeal, and what they *can* do by co-operation.

In the United States we want nothing but concert to perform achievements astonishing to ourselves, dismaying to the adversaries of truth and piety; and most encouraging to every evangelical effort, on the surface of the globe.

No spectacle can be so illustrious in itself, so touching to man, or so grateful to God, as a nation pouring forth its devotion, its talents, and its treasure, for that kingdom of

the Saviour which is righteousness and peace.

If there be a single measure which can overrule objection, subdue opposition, and command exertion, this is the measure. That all our voices, all our affections, all our hands, should be joined in the grand design of promoting “peace on earth and good will toward man”—that they should resist the advance of misery—should carry the light of instruction into the dominions of ignorance and the balm of joy to the soul of anguish; and all this by diffusing the oracles of God—addresses to the understanding an argument which cannot be encountered; and to the heart an appeal which its holiest emotions rise up to second.

Under such impressions, and with such views, fathers, brethren, fellow-citizens, the *American Bible Society* has been formed. Local feelings, party prejudices, sectarian jealousies, are excluded by its very nature. Its members are leagued in that, and in that alone, which calls up every hallowed, and puts down every unhallowed, principle—the dissemination of the Scriptures in the received versions where they exist, and in the most faithful where they may be required. In such a work, whatever is dignified, kind, venerable, true, has ample scope; while sectarian littleness and rivalries can find no avenue of admission.

The only question is, whether an object of such undisputed magnitude can be best attained by a national Society, or by independent associations in friendly understanding and correspondence.

Without entering into the details of this inquiry, we may be permitted to state, in a few words, our reasons of preference to a national

Society supported by local Societies and by individuals throughout our country.

Concentrated action is powerful action. The same powers, when applied by a common direction, will produce results impossible to their divided and partial exercise. A national object unites national feeling and concurrence. Unity of a great system combines energy of effect with economy of means. Accumulated intelligence interests and animates the public mind. And the Catholic efforts of a country, thus harmonized, give her a place in the moral convention of the world; and enable her to act directly upon the universal plans of happiness which are now pervading the nations.

It is true, that the prodigious territory of the United States—the increase of their population, which is gaining every day upon their moral cultivation—and the dreadful consequences which will ensue from a people's outgrowing the knowledge of eternal life; and reverting to a species of heathenism, which shall have all the address and profligacy of civilized society, without any religious control, present a sphere of action, which may for a long time employ and engross the cares of this Society, and of all the local Bible Societies of the land.

In the distinct anticipation of such an urgency, one of the main objects of the *American Bible Society*, is, not merely to provide a sufficiency of well printed and accurate editions of the Scriptures; but also to furnish great districts of the American continent with well executed Stereotype plates, for their cheap and extensive diffusion throughout regions which are now scantily supplied, at a discouraging expense; and which, nevertheless, open a wide and pre-

pared field for the reception of revealed truth.

Yet, let it not be supposed, that geographical or political limits are to be the limits of the *American Bible Society*. That designation is meant to indicate, not the restriction of their labour, but the source of its emanation. They will embrace, with thankfulness and pleasure, every opportunity of raying out, by means of the Bible, according to their ability, the light of life and immortality, to such parts of the world, as are destitute of the blessing, and are within their reach. In this high vocation, their ambition is to be fellow-workers with them who are fellow-workers with God.

#### *People of the United States;*

Have you ever been invited to an enterprize of such grandeur and glory? Do you not value the Holy Scriptures? Value them as containing your sweetest hope; your most thrilling joy? Can you submit to the thought that *you* should be torpid in your endeavours to disperse them, while the rest of Christendom is awake and alert? Shall *you* hang back, in heartless indifference, when Princes come down from their thrones, to bless the cottage of the poor with the gospel of peace; and Imperial Sovereigns are gathering their fairest honours from spreading abroad the oracles of the Lord your God? Is it possible that *you* should not see, in this state of human things, a mighty motion of Divine Providence? The most Heavenly charity treads close upon the march of conflict and blood! The world is at peace! Scarce has the soldier time to unbind his helmet, and to wipe away the sweat from his brow, ere the voice of mercy



succeeds to the clarion of battle, and calls the nations from enmity to love! Crowned heads bow to the head which is to wear "many crowns;" and, for the first time since the promulgation of Christianity, appear to act in unison for the recognition of its gracious principles, as being fraught alike with happiness to man and honour to God.

What has created so strange, so beneficent an alteration? This is no doubt the doing of the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes. But what instrument has he thought fit chiefly to use? That which contributes, in all latitudes and climates, to make Christians feel their unity, to rebuke the spirit of strife, and to open upon them the day of brotherly concord—the Bible! the Bible!—through Bible Societies!

Come then, fellow-citizens, fellow-Christians, let us join in the sacred covenant. Let no heart be cold; no hand be idle; no purse reluctant! Come, while room is left for us in the ranks whose toil is goodness, and whose recompence is victory. Come cheerfully, eagerly, generally. Be it impressed on your souls, that a contribution, saved from even a cheap indulgence, may send a Bible to a desolate family; may become a radiatory point of "grace and truth" to a neighbourhood of error and vice; and that a number of such contributions made at really no expense, may illumine a large tract of country, and successive generations of immortals, in that celestial knowledge, which shall secure their present and their future felicity.

But whatever be the proportion between expectation and experience, thus much is certain: We shall satisfy our conviction of duty—we shall have the praise of high endeavours for the highest ends—we shall min-

ister to the blessedness of thousands, and tens of thousands, of whom we may never see the faces, nor hear the names. We shall set forward a system of happiness which will go on with accelerated motion and augmented vigour, after we shall have finished our career; and confer upon our children, and our children's children, the delight of seeing the wilderness turned into a fruitful field, by the blessing of God upon that seed which their fathers sowed, and themselves watered. In fine, we shall do our part toward that expansion and intensity of light divine, which shall visit, in its progress, the paces of the great, and the hamlets of the small, until the whole "earth be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea!"

#### HONOURABLE MUNIFICENCE.

The Christian public are extensively acquainted with the fact, that several young men, natives of the island of *Owhyhee*, are now in Connecticut. Two of them were brought over in a ship belonging to this port, and arrived about ten years since. They were then lads of 16 and 14 years of age. Their *Owhyhee* names are *Obookiah* and *Hoopoo*. The former has prefixed to his original name the name of Henry; the latter, that of Thomas. A third, landed in Boston about six years ago; and, hearing of Henry *Obookiah*, who was then at Andover, went and joined him. His name is William *Tenooi*. Lately they have been joined by a fourth, who is called John *Hononee*.

Soon after the arrival of the two first, several young men of piety, then connected with Yale College, interested themselves in their behalf, and taught them to read. After this, Henry *Obookiah* resided

some time in Torrington, in the family of the Rev. Mr. Mills ; and afterwards at Andover, where he was instructed by the students of the Theological Seminary. He has not only learned reading, writing, and arithmetic, but grammar and geography ; and what is of more importance, the principles and doctrines of the Christian Religion. He also gives very satisfactory evidence of personal piety, and has made a public profession of religion. The other three, in proportion to the time they have severally been employed in study, have made respectable proficiency. The two first of them are hospitably Christians ; and the mind of the third is deeply interested on religious subjects. It ought also to be mentioned, that these youths have discovered a very lively interest in the religious concerns of one another. When *Obookiah* became anxious about himself, he felt similar anxiety for *Hocpoo* and *Tenooi*. These two have discovered a like solicitude for each other. And, on a late visit, which one of them made to *Honore* ; it was found out, by accident, that he spent most of the day he was there in praying with him.

It is the intention of these young men, when qualified, to return to their own country as MISSIONARIES. For this purpose, Providence unquestionably cast them on our shores ; and, by this very fact, has announced to the Christians of this country, *their duty* with regard to them. The eldest, Henry Obookiah, has already begun a translation of a part of the New Testament into the language of Owhyhee. By his aid, also, an Owhyhee grammar has been partly or wholly completed.

The situation of these young men has occasionally recommended them

to the liberality of the benevolent. As they have become more extensively known, this liberality has been more extensively exerted. We mention, however, with peculiar pleasure, the following instance of honourable munificence on the part of some of the citizens of Savannah in Georgia.

Last fall a young lady of that city was on a visit to her friends in New-Haven. She heard the story of three\* of the Owhyhee lads, and felt a lively interest in their welfare ; particularly as *the future missionaries of Owhyhee*. On her return to Savannah, she took pains, in company with two of her female friends, to make their situation and circumstances known, and to solicit the contributions of some of the citizens in their behalf. Their exertions were not fruitless. A few days since, she forwarded to a lady in this city the sum of *three hundred and thirty-five dollars*, given for the very purpose of educating Henry, Thomas, and William, as missionaries to Owhyhee. "He who giveth a cup of cold water to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward." This example of Christian liberality is highly honourable to the citizens of Savannah ; and ought to be known, that others may *go and do likewise*.

The four youths are now under the care of the FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY. They will be prepared as speedily as possible for a mission among their countrymen. For the present, they are to be stationed at Morris Academy, in Litchfield, under the care of the Rev. W. WEEKS.

*Owhyhee* belongs to a groupe of islands in the Pacific Ocean, called the Sandwich islands, between 18 50 and 20 16 N. lat. and 203 47 and

\* The fourth had not then joined them.



205 E. long. from Greenwich. They are all under the government of one prince, whose name is *Tamaamah*. He is a man of strong sense, and has laboured long and successfully to introduce the arts of civilization among his countrymen. All the islands are fertile and populous. Owhyhee, the largest of them, is 280 miles in extent, and contains 150,000 inhabitants, who are naturally mild, friendly, and hospitable to strangers; although the unfortunate Capt. Cook lost his life here by a sudden impulse of undeserved resentment. The king has a considerable fleet. His troops, to some extent, are furnished with muskets. The natives worship a God called *Acooa*.

The following story respecting *Hoopoo* will interest every one. When he left Owhyhee, he was about fourteen years old. The captain, with whom he came, had given him a pea-jacket, which he was very fond of wearing. A day or two after they sailed, when the ship was running before the wind at the rate of 10 miles an hour, *Hoopoo*, by some accident, fell overboard. One of the sailors, seeing him drop, immediately threw over a hen-coop. The ship, though hauled to as soon as possible, had got full three miles a-head of him. The captain determined to put back, though nothing but the hen-coop was discernable on the waves. The moment *Hoopoo* gained the surface of the water after his fall, and had time to open his eyes and discover the ship, he determined to swim after it. He was a very expert swimmer; but he saw that the ship was sailing much faster than he could swim, and unless he could overtake it, he knew that he must perish. For some time he looked at the ship, and seeing it go from

him so rapidly, gave himself up for lost. In his despair, he cried out to *Acooa*, and promised him, if he would save him, he would give him his *pea-jacket*, when he got back to Owhyhee! He soon got upon the hen-coop, and there rested himself until he was taken on board. After this, during the whole voyage, he never wore his *pea-jacket*. If any of the men urged him to put it on, he always replied, that he must not, for it belonged to *Acooa*. If any of the crew did any thing to that jacket, *Hoopoo* was angry; for it was an affront offered to *Acooa*. For a long time after he landed, he would never suffer the *pea-jacket* to be touched. It was not, until he became fully convinced that *Acooa* was no god, that he felt himself released from the vow which he made to him, while sinking in the ocean, that if he would save him, he would present him that *pea-jacket*, as soon as he got home to Owhyhee.

This instance of native conscientiousness in a heathen boy, in discharging his vow to an imaginary god, ought to raise a blush on the cheek of many a Christian, for his own neglect of paying his vows to the "*Lord that bought him*."

#### REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

*Extract of a letter from the Rev. Charles Prentice, of Canaan, (Con.) to the Editor of the Panoplist, dated March 16, 1816.*

"I am unwilling, Sir, to let this opportunity pass, without saying something as to the flourishing state of religion in this vicinity. The Lord is appearing in his glory to build up Zion. The work is astonishing and glorious in many places. The Spirit descends like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. About forty in this society, and as many in the

north parish of this town, have within a few months, been led to rejoice in hope. There is now a revival in Goshen and Cornwall. In Salisbury, (Con.) more than 250 have of late been numbered with the trophies of the Redeemer. In Norfolk, Colebrook, Winchester, New-Marlborough, and Sandisfield, sinners are flying to Christ as clouds, and as doves to their windows. In the last mentioned town, as I am informed, more than two hundred are the hopeful subjects of renewing grace; and more than 100 in each of the other four places. The work is free from enthusiasm, is extended to many children and youth, and to numbers in all the intermediate stages between youth and old age. Yes, many a hoary-headed veteran, who had fought seventy years under the banner of Satan, has left the ranks of the adversary of God, and is now rejoicing at the feet of Jesus. I hope you may be favoured with a detailed account of the blessed work, in all the places which I have named.

"How glorious, my dear friend, is the day in which we are permitted to live. What wonders are unfolding. How obvious is it, from the signs of the times, that the long wished for day of the Church's triumph begins to dawn, and that, in all its glory, it will soon be ushered in, with universal hosannahs to the Son of David.

*Extract of a letter from Norfolk, Va. dated May 11, 1816.*

"The people of Norfolk are crowding the Meeting Houses, and numbers seem to be much concerned for the salvation of their souls. Prayer meetings are held in private houses now, where a few months since, card parties, &c. were held."

*Christian Herald.*

*For the Religious Intelligencer.*

*Mr. Whiting,*

I transmit to you a few poetical thoughts, occasioned by reading the 121st Psalm, that beautifully animating expression of confidence in "Him who keepeth Israel, and will neither slumber or sleep." I could wish to have transfused into it more of the spirit of the original: yet, if in your opinion, it will excite one pious thought, or one consoling reflection, you are at liberty to make use of it in your publication. That your exertions in diffusing religious knowledge may be successful, and your attempts to "sow the good seed of the word" receive a blessing from the Lord of the Harvest, is the wish of your

FRIEND.

Thou, who hast mourn'd with contrite heart,  
Thy weak, and oft mistaken part;  
Who, bent before the Eternal Throne,  
Hast sought thine aid from God alone,  
Fear not to trust that changeless Friend;  
Shrink not to meet what He shall send.  
Tread with firm step the narrow gloom,  
That parts the cradle from the tomb:  
For if thy heart must sometimes sigh,  
And bitter tears bedew thy eye;  
Or if perchance thy foot should slide,  
Thou hast a Father and a Guide,  
Unseen—yet ever at thy side.  
He guards the weak, restrains the bold  
And leads the wanderer to His fold.

By pain, or weariness oppress,  
Go meekly to thy couch of rest:  
A Friend—a Comforter is nigh,  
With watchful, ever-open eye.  
He that protects thee will not sleep:  
Oh, rest in slumbers soft and deep.

Sometimes the sun, with noon-tide blaze,  
Darts sickness from his fervid rays;  
Sometimes the moon, with baleful pow'r,  
Sheds death upon the midnight hour;  
But these on thee shall never shine,  
Except to prompt the thought divine—  
Except to cheer thy mortal race,  
And light thee to that glorious place,  
Where lamps obscure, and dim with shade,  
And setting suns, and moons that wane,  
And twinkling stars that glow and fade,  
Shall never shed their light again.

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